

CLAIMS

WE CLAIM:

1. Apparatus for capturing handwritten data, comprising
a hand-held self-contained portable handwritten data capture
assembly capable of receiving normally generated handwritten
5 material, said assembly comprising;

an integral combination of a portable data terminal for
processing data;

a removable handwritten data receiving module removably
connected to the data terminal and having a longitudinally
10 extensive receiving surface for receiving a spacially extended
sequence of information conveying handwritten data while the
module is connected with the data terminal;

means in said module for reading the spacially extended
sequence of information conveying handwritten data as applied to
15 said receiving surface and entering the data into the data
terminal; and

means for locking the receiving module into engagement with
the data terminal.

2. The data capturing apparatus of claim 1 in which the
20 means for reading the handwritten data is an optical digital
scanner operatively connected with said portable data terminal
and operative for optical reading of handwritten data on the
receiving surface.

3. The data capturing apparatus of claim 1 in which the means for reading the handwritten data includes a digitizing pad operatively associated with said longitudinally extensive receiving surface.

5 4. The data capturing apparatus of claim 1 in which the data terminal is a hand-held unit.

10 5. The data capturing apparatus of claim 4 in which the module providing for entry of the handwritten data is quickly removable as a unit from the hand-held data terminal, the data terminal being fully operational for reading and processing data while separate from said module.

15 6. The data capturing apparatus of claim 1 wherein means for locking includes a snap-on mechanical connection between the module and the data terminal such that the module is readily attached to and detached from the data terminal.

20 7. The data capturing apparatus of claim 1 wherein the data capture assembly is constructed to receive and store cursive handwritten data such as signatures.

8. The data capturing apparatus of claim 6 wherein the module includes a case having a bottom surface connecting a front and rear wall, a depending hinge formed along the bottom surface of the case below the front wall, a lug extending along the depending hinge, and a cable plug disposed on the bottom surface near the rear wall; wherein the data terminal includes a housing having a top surface, a shoulder formed along the top surface disposed to receive the lug, and a receptacle disposed in the top surface to receive the cable plug; and wherein the snap-on mechanical connection comprises the sequential engagement of the lug and the shoulder followed by the engagement of the receptacle and the cable plug.

9. The data capturing apparatus of claim 8 wherein force applied to the receiving module biases the module toward a locked position on the data terminal.

10. The data capturing apparatus of claim 8 wherein the module is rotated forwardly to disengage the module from the data terminal.

11. Apparatus for capturing handwritten data, comprising
a hand-held self-contained portable handwritten data capture
assembly capable of receiving normally generated handwritten
material, said assembly comprising

5 an integral combination of a portable data terminal for
processing data, the data terminal including a display surface;

a removable handwritten data receiving module removably
connected to the data terminal and having a longitudinally
extensive receiving surface for receiving a spacially extended
10 sequence of information conveying handwritten data while the
module is connected with the data terminal;

means in said module for reading the spacially extended
sequence of information conveying handwritten data as applied to
said receiving surface and entering the data into the data
terminal; and

means for displaying the handwritten data on the display
surface of the data terminal as it is entered on the receiving
surface.

12. The data capturing apparatus of claim 11 in which the
20 means for reading the handwritten data is an optical digital
scanner operatively connected with said portable data terminal
and operative for optical reading of handwritten data on the
receiving surface.

13. The data capturing apparatus of claim 11 in which the means for reading the handwritten data includes a digitizing pad operatively associated with said longitudinally extensive receiving surface.

5 14. The data capturing apparatus of claim 11 in which the data terminal is a hand-held unit.

15. The data capturing apparatus of claim 14 in which the module providing for entry of the handwritten data is quickly removable as a unit from the hand-held data terminal, the data
10 terminal being fully operational for reading and processing data while separate from said module.

16. The data capturing apparatus of claim 11 wherein the module has a snap-on mechanical connection with the data terminal such that the module is readily attached to and detached from the
15 data terminal.

17. The data capturing apparatus of claim 11 wherein the data capture assembly is constructed to receive and store cursive handwritten data such as signatures.

18. The data capturing apparatus of claim 11 wherein stored
20 handwritten data is displayed on the display surface of the data terminal adjacent to the handwritten data entered on the receiving surface and subsequently displayed on the display surface such that the stored handwritten data and entered handwritten data may be easily compared.

19. The data capturing apparatus of claim 18 wherein the stored handwritten data is displayed directly above the entered handwritten data.

20. The data capturing apparatus of claim 19 wherein an indication of validity appears on the display surface after the comparison of the stored handwritten data and the entered handwritten data.